3.
EXISTING CONDITIONS

A range of existing natural and man-made conditions influence future growth and development possibilities in Hallam. These include existing soil conditions, topography, land-use areas, transportation patterns, and community facilities and services. An understanding of these features and their implications is important to the local planning process.

This chapter reviews these existing conditions and identifies key opportunities and constraints which could affect future development.

NATURAL CONDITIONS

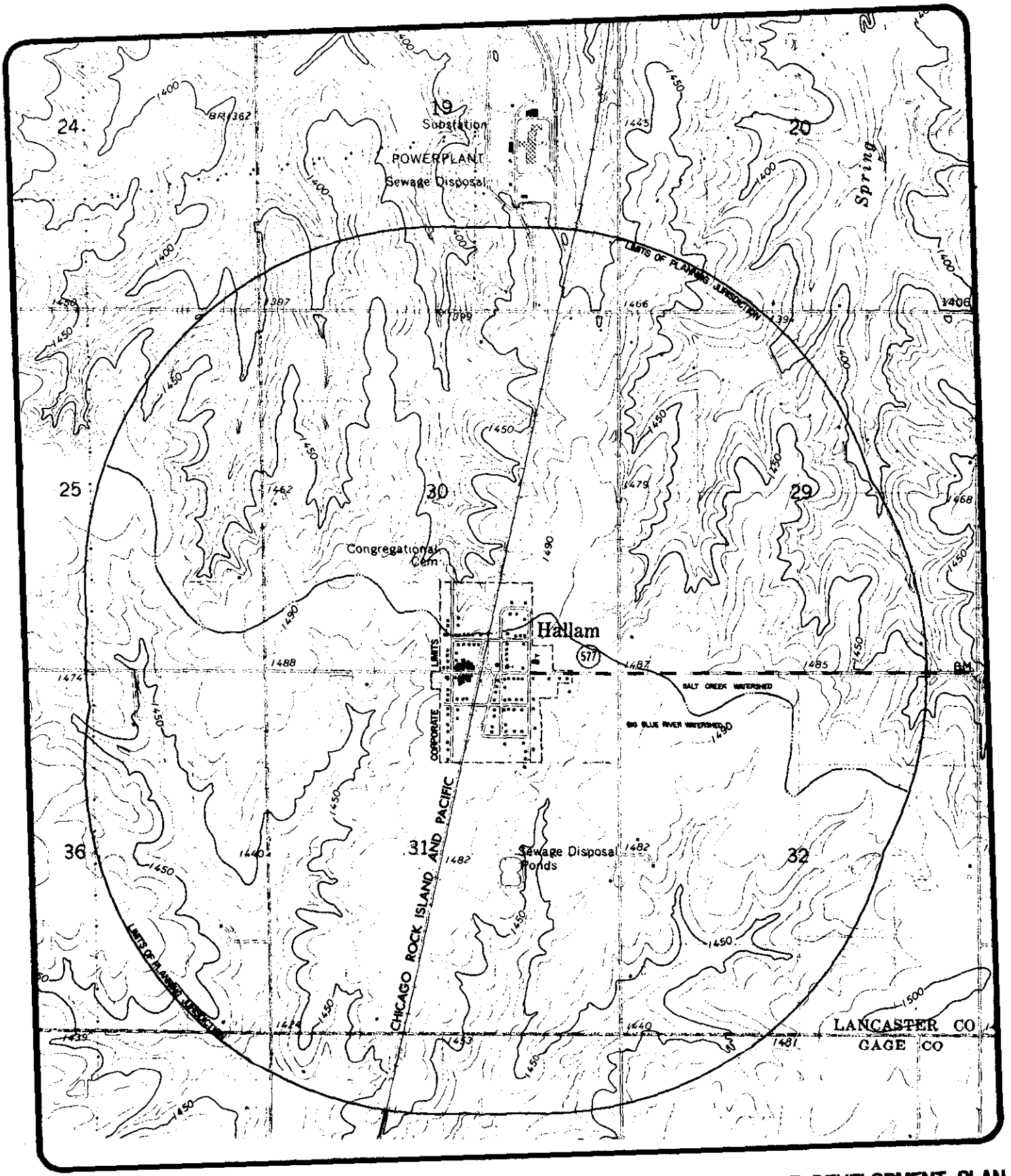
Natural conditions influence the physical form of Hallam and the directions which new growth should take. The most important include topography and soils.

Topography

Hallam lies on a ridge line which separates the Salt Creek and Blue River drainage areas. The village itself sits on a plateau at the midpoint of two tributaries to Clatonia Creek and two intermittent streams which are tributary to the Spring Branch and the Olive Branch of Salt Creek (see Map 2). The area in which the village is located slopes gently upward from southwest to northeast, from an elevation of approximately 1,480 to 1,490 feet. Slopes drop off more sharply to the northwest and southeast. Surface runoff is essentially north to south and to the two small tributaries which flank the village.

Few natural tree masses remain within the planning area, although some vegetation has been planted on nearby farmsteads.

While the local topography poses no severe development constaints, it does have certain growth implications. If new growth occurs in areas which are too low in elevation, it cannot be served by the existing trunk lines of the gravity flow sewer collection system. In general, growth to the west or north would require major utility improvements.



ELEVATIONS ARE MEAN SEA LEVEL CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET

DRAINAGE DIVIDE

COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN
HALLAM, NEBRASKA

SCALE IN FEET

2

TOPOGRAPHY

Soils

The capacity of local soils to support different land-use activities is an important consideration in comprehensive planning. While detailed analyses and test borings are required to evaluate specific building sites, generalized soil interpretations are useful in identifying potential development problems.

Soils in the Hallam area are illustrated in Map 3. The most common types are discussed briefly below, based on USDA Soil Conservation Service data. Soil surveying is being accelerated with funding from the Lower Platte South Natural Resource District.

-- *Crete* soils are the most prevalent. These upland soils occupy the highest elevations in the area. Their high shrink-swell potential poses problems for construction of foundations and roadbeds unless adequate precautions are taken. Slow permeability severely limits the use of septic tanks. Water runoff is slow. Steel reinforcement is often used to prevent cracks in basement walls.

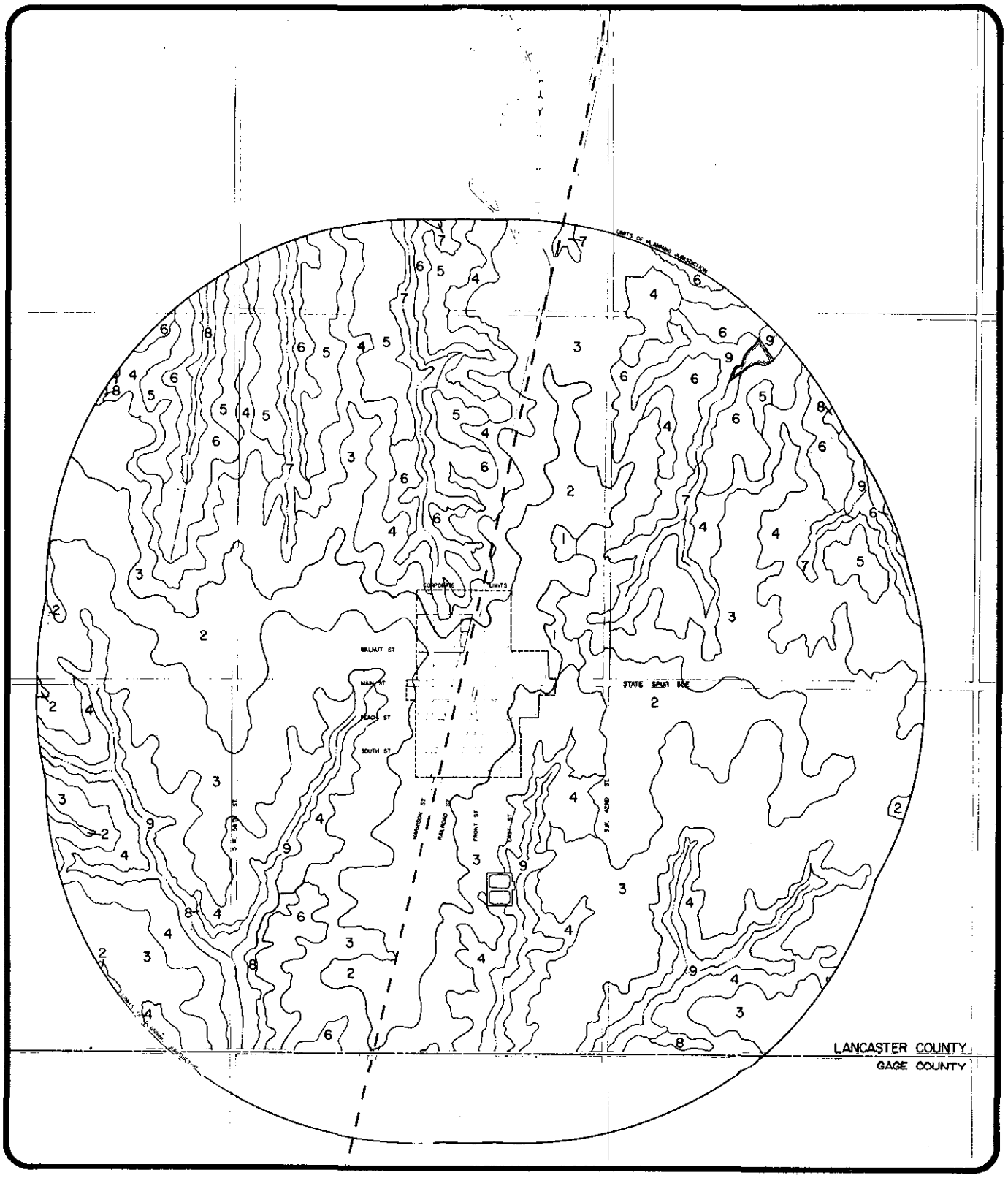
-- *Wymore* soils are also prominent in the area. These clayey soils have many of the same chemical and physical properties as Crete soils. They occur in upland hillsides and can have fair potential for agriculture. Like Crete, they have high shrink-swell potential and slow permeability. They increase the risk of water seepage into basements as one moves lower on side slopes.

-- *Kennebec/Colo* soils occasionally occur in flooded bottomland soils of upland drainageways. Colo soils also have poor internal drainage. These soils are suitable for cultivation, and most local grasses and trees grow well in these areas. Wetness and floods can be a problem. Very few buildings are constructed on these soils because of the flood hazard. Roads that cross these areas need to be elevated to prevent damage from floodwaters.

-- *Butler* soils occur in limited areas around the village. These soils have a silt loam surface layer and a claypan subsoil. Water runoff is slow, and they are often wet in the spring. Shrink-swell potential is high. Although these soils are well suited for agriculture, they pose severe limitations on most types of construction.

-- *Pawnee and Mayberry* soils occur on lower ridgetops and side slopes. Slow permeability, high shrink-swell potential, and moderate frost action are limitations caused by these soils. Slope increases wetness probability due to runoff.

-- *Judson* soils occupy gently-sloping colluvial foot slopes. Natural fertility is high. Cultivated crops, grass, and trees are well suited to these soils. Runoff water from higher adjacent soils is a hazard.



1 BUTLER
2 CRETE
3 WYMORE
4 PAWNEE / MAYBERRY
5 STEINAUER
6 BURCHARD / SHELBY
7 BREAKS-ALLUVIAL LAND
8 JUDSON
9 KENNEBEC / COLO

WATER

INTERMITTENT STREAM

SOILS

COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN
HALLAM, NEBRASKA

0 330 660 990 1320 1650 1980 2310 2640

SCALE IN FEET

3

-- *Burchard and Shelby* soils occupy strongly sloping hillsides. Rocks or small pebbles are often common to the areas. They have a fair potential for growing crops, grass, and trees in windbreaks. Shrink-swell potential and susceptibility to frost action are moderate to high. Slow water intake rates these soils poorly to septic tank filter fields. The slopes severely limit sites for sewage lagoons.

-- *Steinauer* soils developed in glacial till on strongly-sloping to steep upland hillside. They are not well suited for agriculture. Erosion hazard is high. Organic matter content and fertility are low. These soils pose severe limitations on most types of construction because of slope.

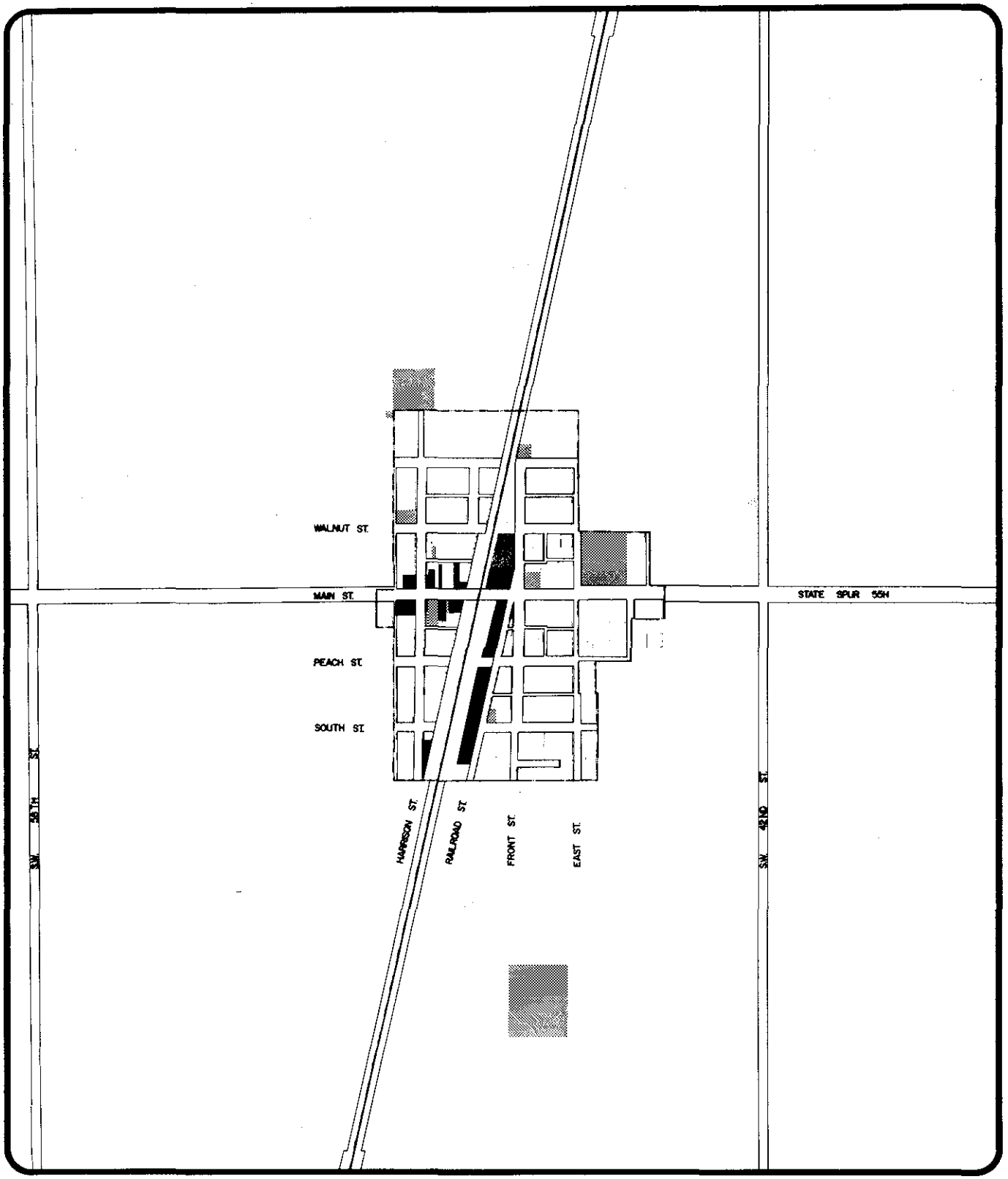
-- *Breaks-alluvial land* consists of moderately-steep or steep, well-drained soils on side slopes and very gently sloping, moderately well-drained soils on bottomlands along drainageways of the uplands. The alluvial soils on the bottomlands are frequently flooded and are dissected by deeply entrenched channels. Permeability is moderate or moderately slow. This land has poor potential for farming and for most engineering uses. The canopy of tree growth reduces the production of grass for grazing. However, it provides protection for livestock and good habitat for wildlife. Potential pond reservoir sites are plentiful. Roads that cross these areas require a large amount of fill material.

In general, most soils within or adjacent to built-up portions of the village can be made suitable for development, provided appropriate building precautions are taken. However, with the exception of Judson, all soils in the Hallam planning area severely limit the use of septic tanks. Centralized wastewater treatment will be necessary for any new development.

EXISTING LAND-USE

Hallam contains a range of land-uses, including residential, commercial, and public and quasi-public activities (see Map 4). They are arranged in a relatively compact pattern centered around the intersection of State Spur 55 H (Main Street) and the railroad, surrounded by a larger agricultural area. The village development lies both east and west of the railroad, although most newer development has occurred to the east.

Table 1 lists current acreage totals for different land-use activities. It also indicates changes which occurred from 1961 to 1970 and from 1970 to 1976. Of the total 84.8 acres within the corporate limits, approximately 81 percent is developed. Specific land-use areas are briefly identified as follows.



- VACANT & AGRICULTURE
- RESIDENTIAL
- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS
- PUBLIC & SEMI-PUBLIC

COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN
HALLAM, NEBRASKA

0 330 660 990 1320
SCALE IN FEET

EXISTING LAND USE

4

Table 1
HALLAM LAND-USE ACREAGE TOTALS

	January 1961	January 1970	January 1976
Population (persons)	264	280	285[1]
Dwelling Units (number)	90	104	119
Population/Dwelling Units	2.93	2.69	2.39
Single-family Units and Trailers	14.3[2]	23.1[2]	26.0[2]
Subtotal Residential:	14.3	23.1	26.0
Commercial	1.0	0.9	0.8
Public and Semipublic	3.9	4.2	4.5
Parks and Playgrounds	0.7	0.7	0.7
Industry	3.6	2.9	3.1
Railroad	13.0	10.7	10.7
Subtotal Nonresidential:	22.2	19.4	19.8
Streets	22.2	22.8	22.8
Subtotal Developed:	58.7	65.3	68.6
Vacant and Agriculture	17.6	19.5	16.2
Total:	76.3	84.8	84.8

[1]Estimated January, 1976, population.
[2]Acres.
Source: Lincoln City-Lancaster County Planning Department.

Residential Areas

Housing has been developed in all four quadrants of the village, focused around the intersection of Main Street and the railroad. The largest residential neighborhood is to the southeast. Development is predominantly single-family and owner-occupied. The village has no apartments, although some single-family units have been converted to duplex. Several mobile homes are scattered throughout the village. A designated mobile home court on the west side of Harrison Street, south of South Street, is now almost vacant--due, in part, to the scatteration and lack of controls regarding mobile home location. Several modular

homes and FHA-insured units are located near South Street in the southeast corner of the village. Most homes are well-maintained and in good condition. Most recent residential construction has occurred in the southeast corner, with a few relatively new units in the northeast corner east of the tracks, and north of Main Street east of the school.

According to the *Community Attitude Survey*, the most common, locally perceived housing problems include lack of available land appropriate for new construction, lack of available housing, lack of choice in housing types, and some deterioration of older homes.

Commercial and Industrial Development

Most commercial uses are located in the village center, on Main Street west of the railroad. The community maintains approximately 15 commercial business establishments, including the bank, a small food store, a furniture store, a cafe, a bar, auto services, and other convenience-type facilities. Other businesses apparently have closed in recent years. Several vacant structures and land parcels are available for development within the village center.

Limited industrial land-uses, including the grain elevator and several storage and supply facilities are clustered adjacent to and east of the rail line, primarily south of Main Street. Several storage and garage facilities also front Main Street in the village center.

Public and Semipublic Land-uses

Most public and semipublic facilities, including the post office and Town Hall are located in the village center. These are near the geographic heart of the community and are accessible to all residents. Other semipublic land-uses, including the school, two churches, and a park, are distributed through the village.

Sheldon Station Generating Plant

Most land surrounding Hallam is rural and in agricultural use. The one significant exception is Sheldon Station, one mile north of the village.

Sheldon, currently the largest electric power-generating plant in the state west of Omaha, was constructed in 1958 as a combined nuclear and conventional facility. It was a power-reactor demonstration project administered by the Atomic Energy Commission with Consumers' Power contracted to construct and operate it. After problems developed in 1963, the nuclear phase was discontinued, and the plant is now a conventional facility only, owned and operated by the Nebraska Public Power District. It distributes power either wholesale or retail to Lincoln and to many towns and suppliers in the state.

Several aspects of the Sheldon operation have implications for planning in Hallam. Southwest 42nd Street, one-quarter mile east of the village, provides primary vehicular access to the plant. Water required for the steam generators comes from Sheldon wells, and water is discharged into local streams. The plant has 72 employees, several of whom apparently depend upon facilities and services within the village. Hallam should continue to monitor plans and operations at Sheldon and seek cooperation on matters of mutual concern.

TRANSPORTATION

The overall transportation system consists of regional roadways, local streets and parking areas, the railroad, sidewalks, and limited transit service. The system provides access to Hallam from the surrounding area and serves to move people and vehicles within and around the village. The efficiency and convenience of the system significantly affects future development opportunities.

Regional Roadways

Two paved regional roadways link Hallam with surrounding communities and activities: U.S. Route 77, which provides access to Lincoln and Beatrice, and State Spur 55 H, which connects the village with U.S. 77 and State Highway 33, which leads to Crete. Both facilities are in relatively good condition. Major improvements are programmed for Highway 77, including the paving of shoulders from the county line to Highway 33, and the widening to four lanes from Highway 33 north to Lincoln.

Hallam is also served by a system of unpaved county roads which provide access to and from the rural countryside. Southwest 42nd Street, a designated county collector, approximately one-quarter mile east of the village, provides access to the Sheldon Station generating plant north of Hallam. The county plans to pave Southwest 42nd Street from the plant south to the county line in 1976. Other county road improvements within the planning period include replacement of bridges with culverts and engineering and eventual paving of Southwest 42nd Street to Denton Road and county roads to Crete via Kramer.

Local Streets

The local street system is basically a grid pattern of parallel streets modified in some areas by the railroad. Main Street, with a right-of-way width of 80 feet, is paved; all other local streets are unpaved, with right-of-way widths varying from 30 to 70 feet. The village has prepared a street improvement plan--to be implemented in 1976--which calls for the paving of most intersections and providing curbs and gutters along most streets. With the exception of Main, all streets will be gravel-surfaced; local streets will be paved only where abutting property owners agree to a special assessment.

The unpaved alleyways, 20 feet wide, are seldom used for access and essentially serve only as utility easements.

Parking

Diagonal parking spaces along Main Street are available in the village center. Few businesses or facilities now provide off-street parking space. There is no apparent shortage of parking space in the area at the present time. On-street parking is also common in residential areas. Since few village streets have curbs, street maintenance could become a problem.

Railroad

The Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific single-track rail line, running diagonally from northeast to southwest, bisects the village. Hallam was once a depot stop on the line, and the railroad was an important element in the community. Rail service is now limited, although six trains per day move through the village. Some grain shipping still occurs. No increase is anticipated in the near future.

The rail crossing at Main Street is protected by a gate and flashing lights. Sightlines to the north (for traffic moving west) are somewhat restricted by the angle of the tracks and by the existing grain elevator. Even though rail traffic is light, the community should consider improving safety features at other crossings in the village.

In many ways, the rail line is a development constraint. It divides the community into two parts and separates the village center from the major residential areas. The careful location of new development and pedestrian improvements could minimize this impact in the future.

Sidewalks

Since Hallam is small in area, walking should be a primary means of moving about within the village. However, sidewalks are intermittent, and many are in poor condition. Walking is difficult in bad weather, and many pedestrians must now use roadways. New sidewalks should be considered.

Transit

Hallam is currently served one day a week by a "Handi Bus" sponsored by the City of Lincoln, Lancaster County, the Nebraska Commission on Aging, and the League of Human Dignity. This service, which connects the village with Lincoln, is available to the elderly and the infirm, and their guests. Local residents consider this adequate and feel that extended transit service is not warranted at present. However, if the village does experience significant new development, transit could provide valuable service to many residents and would enhance continued development possibilities. The village might consider strategies for promoting such service at that time.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Community facilities and services provide for the day-to-day needs of the village. They include services which affect the health, safety, and well-being of area residents and businesses. They are key factors in the overall quality of life in the village and must be adequately provided for in the future.

Hallam provides several of these services directly to local residents, including water and sewer service, park facilities, and fire protection (see Map 5). Other services--like schools and electricity--are provided by outside regional or special purpose districts. Still others--like hospital services--must be obtained in Lincoln or other nearby communities.

Several of the most important locally-based community facilities are discussed below.

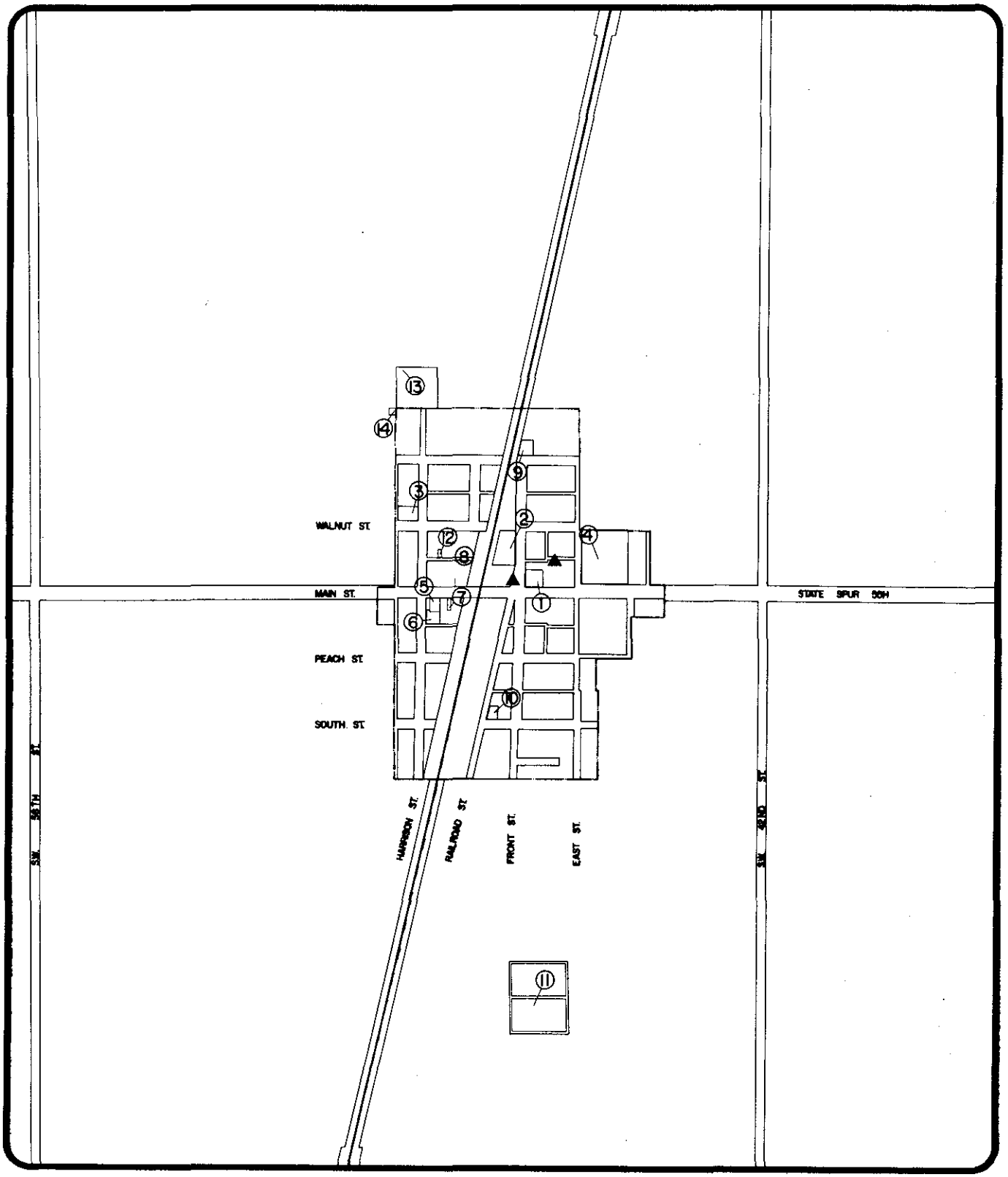
Water Facilities

The village currently operates a central pressurized water system, with two wells north of Main Street east of the village center and underground storage facilities with capacities totalling approximately 4,500 gallons. The original distribution system, consisting of two-inch and four-inch lines, was installed in 1953. The village is currently undergoing major distribution system improvements, installing six- and eight-inch lines. Water pressure has been low at several dead ends, but new additions will eliminate all but two unavoidable dead ends. Several new fire hydrants are also being installed. Water quality in the village is generally good.

The village is studying the possibility of providing a new on-grade water storage tank to meet the increasing demand for water for both domestic and fire protection purposes.

Sewer Facilities

Hallam operates a central wastewater collection and treatment system, installed in 1958. The treatment point for the system is a two-cell stabilization lagoon located south of the village. An application for federal funding has been submitted for expanded treatment facilities to meet 1977 EPA requirements. The gravity flow collection system consisting of six and eight-inch lines could accommodate growth to the east and south with only minor additions. Major trunk line improvements could be required to serve growth to the west or north. Local soils are not suitable for septic fields, and future development should be required to connect with the centralized system where service can be provided.



COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN
HALLAM, NEBRASKA

EXISTING FACILITIES

5

Solid Waste Collection and Disposal

Solid waste collection is handled by a private collection service based in Beatrice. Individual homeowners pay for door-to-door pickup. Solid waste disposal is conducted at the sanitary landfill site in Beatrice.

Hallam had the opportunity to participate in the county-assisted "green-box" solid waste disposal demonstration project, begun in 1974. However, village residents preferred to continue with the private collection service. The arrangement is still satisfactory, and no changes are anticipated in the near future.

Parks and Recreation

Hallam maintains one public park site totalling approximately 0.8 acre adjacent to the rail line north of the grain elevator. This land is leased from the railroad on a year-to-year basis. Except for two picnic tables, the park has no recreational facilities. The schoolyard is also a key recreational resource for local residents.

Town Hall and Post Office

The Town Hall and post office are located in the village center on the south side of Main Street. The Town Hall, a brick structure constructed in 1951, contains public meeting rooms, a stage and gym with a seating capacity of 500, and a kitchen. Both facilities are in good condition and should serve the village adequately for the short-range future.

Public School Services

Hallam is located in the Crete Consolidated School District No. 2. At present, village students in grades one through four attend Hallam Elementary School, located on the north side of Main Street east of the village center. Students in all higher grades are bussed to schools in Crete.

Hallam School is a one-story, four-room structure approximately 20 years old, in excellent condition. The school operates on a two-classroom program and currently serves about 30 students. The large schoolyard also represents a valuable recreational resource for local residents.

Because of relatively small enrollments, the school district is considering abandonment of Hallam School, and it appears that the facility will be closed in the Summer of 1976.

Fire Protection

The village has an agreement with the Hallam Rural Fire Protection District whereby the district provides firefighting equipment and the

village provides volunteer firemen and a fire station facility. Donations from residents of both the village and the surrounding area support a well-equipped rescue unit, which responds to a range of emergency situations, including automobile accidents, rescue and first aid, and transport to hospitals in the area.

The local fire station, located south of the auditorium with access and egress onto Harrison Street, is a four-bay, brick and steel structure approximately 20 years old. It is the only station in the Hallam district, which includes a large service area extending into two counties. Forty local volunteer firemen maintain three firefighting vehicles in addition to the rescue unit. Most calls are in response to brush fires in rural areas.

Police Protection

The County Sheriff's Department provides police patrol services for all areas of the county lying beyond the Lincoln city limits. A county patrol car passess through Hallam several times per night. The village recently has supplemented these patrol services by hiring a local marshall. At present, this combined system appears satisfactory.

County Road Maintenance Garage

The County Surveyor operates a road maintenance garage in the northeast corner of the village. The county is considering consolidation of the highway maintenance function at a few central sites, and the future of the Hallam garage is uncertain.

The presence of the garage within the village offers certain advantages to local residents, including speed in snow removal. If its county function is phased out, the village could consider maintaining the garage as a municipal facility.

Health Services

Although no health services or facilities are provided on a permanent basis, the village is served by the Lincoln City-Lancaster County Health Department's "visiting nurse program." Under this program, a public health nurse visits Hallam on the second Tuesday of each month, and performs a range of services including health screening tests, free child immunizations, health counseling, child development tests, and special care for the elderly. Nurses will also make special visits to invalids in the community.

Although a local doctor would be highly desirable, small communities throughout the country are experiencing more difficulty attracting physicians. Therefore, the village should carefully monitor and attempt to capitalize on the progressive health care programs of the Health Department.

Other Facilities

Several other semipublic facilities provide important services to local residents. "Bingo Hall," located on the north side of Main Street in the village center, can be rented for special public or private activities. The two churches, both with long traditions in Hallam, also play important roles in the community and are recognized in the planning program as supporting service facilities.